

# Twelve commercial perfins now known on Schermack Type III coils

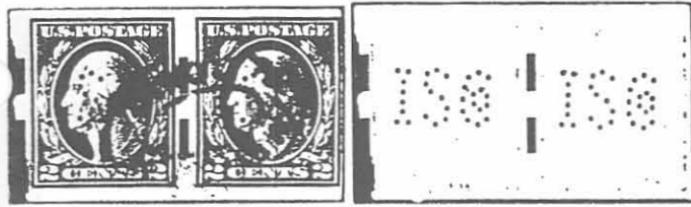
Robert J. Schwerdt

**S**ince the publication of my short article about Schermack perfins (*Bulletin*, January 1996, page 19), four more types have been reported—bringing to twelve the number of commercial perfins reported on Schermack Type III coil stamps.

Most collectors are familiar with the geometric type Schermack perfins: the diamond, the 12-hole open square, and the 9-hole grid.

The grid is the most common of the three types, produced on the

Type III Schermack (Mail-o-meter) machines. The machines created the vertical slot separation holes and could also—thanks to the B. Straight adapter—punch code holes into the stamps as they were being cut



This pair of Schermack Type III coils carries the perfin of the International Silver Company of Meriden, CT, but the ragged edge suggests it was not applied by the Schermack machine.  
From the collection of Sal Guarini

from the rolls and affixed to envelopes. In its day—before postage meters—it was quite a step toward automation.

The commercial logo perfins on Schermack coils were not produced by the Schermack machines. They were made on regular perfin machines. The logo Schermacks still show the characteristic slotted separations, but the stamps were often torn apart rather than cut apart—

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## Did the commercial patterns predate the Schermack control-holes?

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clearly indicated by the rough edges of known examples.

Bear in mind that the Schermack slotting and the applying of the company perfins both involved imperforate sheets of stamps made by the companies into rolls of imperforate coil stamps. If you are unfamiliar with the stamps produced by Schermack and other automated stamp perforating and affixing machines, check the *Scott Specialized Catalog of U.S. Stamps*.

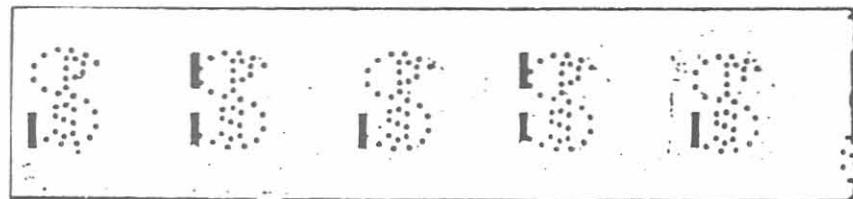
That brings us to an interesting question: which happened first? Did the Schermack slots get sliced into the stamps and perhaps the leftovers then get perforated with the company logo? Or did the company logo get perforated into the stamps first and then the stamps get fed

Catalog Number	Pattern	Company Identification
B15	B in star	Burroughs Adding Machine Co., Detroit
B30	BA&Co	B. Altman & Company, New York
C4	C	Mutual Rubber Refining Co., Chicago
C46*	C(&R)	Beckley Ralston Co., Chicago
D92	DR	Devoe & Reynolds Co., Chicago
F84	FHL	F. H. Liggett, New York
I91*	ISCO(o)	International Silver Co., Meriden, CT
J29**	JDP/Co	John Deere Plow Co, Moline, IL***
L130	LOW	David Low & Company, Salem, MA
N54	NCS	National Cloak & Suit Co., New York
S70**	SCC(o)	Simpson Crawford Co., New York
S234	PS in large S loops	Southern Pacific SS Lines, New York

\*Reported by Sal Guarini

\*\*Reported by the author

\*\*\*Unconfirmed identification



This unusual strip of five perfinned Schermack Type III coils has full gum.

(From the collection of Sal Guarini)

into the Schermack affixing machines?

The Schermack machines (Schermack became Mail-om-eter and later Mail-o-meter while all this was going on) were in use until 1927. However, all the known examples of the logos on the Schermacks are on the early Franklin and Washington issues.

Could it be that the logo perfins are the forerunners of the Schermack geometric types?

Is it possible that the company logo perfins caused the Schermack apparatus to jam?

Could that have caused the logo perforations to be discontinued—and paved the way for the

B. Straight adapter which punched in the coded holes? Straight's geometric designs concentrated the holes near the center of the stamp and thus provided less chance for the machinery to malfunction.

It should be noted that none of the logo stamps were used by the same companies that processed the geometric patterns. The unused strip of five shown above—probably the length to fit a commercial perfin machine—has full gum.

Unfortunately, the *which came first* question may remain forever unanswered. There is probably no one living today

who was involved in the process, whatever it might have been.

The twelve known types of logo perfins on Schermack Type III coils are listed at the top of this page. Eight of them were included in the previous *Bulletin* article and are included here for the benefit of new members.

There are likely other Schermack logo perfins lurking in collections and dealers' stocks. Please report any additional types you find to me so they can be added to the list.

All Schermack perfins are scarce and desirable items; it might be said that the logo Schermacks are inherently scarcer than the geometric patterns.

*Robert J. Schwerdt, who retired in 1996 as foreign catalog chairman, is the author of the four-part World Perfins Catalog. He also has an extensive collection of Schermack Type III perfins.*